

IN LOVING MEMORY

Daniel Kenneth “Dan” Tarbell Sr.

August 10, 1946 – July 7, 2026



A Life of Service

United States Navy Veteran • Community Leader • Trusted Friend

Obituary

Daniel Kenneth “Dan” Tarbell Sr., 79, of Vancouver, Washington, passed away on July 7, 2026. He leaves behind an extraordinary legacy of service—to his country, his family, his fellow veterans, and the Southwest Washington community.

Dan enlisted in the United States Navy at the age of 17 and served for six years, including service in Vietnam as a noncommissioned officer. He was honorably discharged in 1969. Dan remained deeply proud of his military service and devoted much of the rest of his life to supporting veterans, active-duty service members, and military families.

The year 1969 held special meaning for Dan. In a conversation with his son, Dan Jr., about a 1969 pickup truck Dan Sr. wanted, Dan Sr. explained that 1969 had been an especially good year in his life. It was the year he completed his Navy service and met and married the love of his life, Linda. Dan’s sister, Bonnie, who had attended school with Linda, introduced them. Dan and Linda were married in November 1969 and shared more than 52 years together before Linda passed away on May 24, 2022.

In 1975, Dan and Linda purchased the family home that Dan would keep for the remainder of his life. Their son, Dan Jr., now lives in that home, continuing an important part of the Tarbell family legacy. Dan and Linda had two children, Bobbie Tarbell Johns and Daniel Tarbell Jr.

In his civilian career, Dan worked in custom sheet metal and became an accomplished and respected superintendent with MacDonald-Miller Facility Solutions, where he worked from 2000 until 2014. A natural leader, he was known for his ability to engage people, coordinate complex projects, and earn the respect of those with whom he worked. He also served in a leadership role with SMART Local 16, representing sheet-metal workers throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Service to Veterans and Community

Dan’s commitment to veterans was most visible through his service to La Société des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux, commonly known as the 40 et 8, and the Community Military Appreciation Committee.

In 2010, Dan and Larry Smith co-founded the Community Military Appreciation Committee after the U.S. Army Reserve’s 104th Training Division relocated from its historic headquarters at Vancouver Barracks to Fort Lewis, now Joint Base Lewis-McChord. The relocation created a need for a community organization to continue coordinating Vancouver’s Memorial Day observance and other important patriotic ceremonies.

Dan and Larry stepped forward to meet that need.

Beginning with approximately 20 people at its first meeting, CMAC grew into a strong coalition of veterans’ organizations, civic leaders, businesses, government agencies, and community members. Dan’s remarkable networking abilities and long-established relationships within the veterans’ community were instrumental in that growth. He helped bring people and organizations together around a shared mission of honoring veterans and preserving the traditions that remind the community of their service and sacrifice.

As a longtime CMAC co-chair, Dan helped organize and support Memorial Day observances, Veterans Day activities, POW/MIA remembrance ceremonies, Gold Star family recognitions, and numerous other community events. Much of his most important work took place behind the scenes—from obtaining permits and coordinating logistics to representing CMAC throughout the community. He also participated personally in solemn traditions, including laying wreaths at the Clark County Veterans War Memorial.

During CMAC’s 10th-anniversary celebration in 2020, Dan was honored for his leadership, guidance, and many years of dedicated service. He received numerous accolades and a well-deserved standing ovation from the organization and community he had helped bring together.

Leadership and Legacy

Dan also held leadership positions at the local, state, and national levels of the 40 et 8. He served for six years as Sous Chef de Chemin de Fer and for one year as Chef de Chemin de Fer, the organization's national leader. In that role, he helped supervise and guide the Voiture Nationale, its national officers, and its overall administration.

Dan dedicated countless hours to advancing the 40 et 8's patriotic and charitable missions. He was particularly committed to selecting scholarship recipients and supporting students from Gold Star families. His national responsibilities also included advancing programs devoted to child welfare, nurses' training scholarships, and research into important medical causes.

At the state level, Dan served for one year as Grand Chef de Gare, leading the 40 et 8 throughout Washington. Whether serving locally, statewide, or nationally, Dan brought the same qualities to every responsibility: patriotism, sound judgment, personal warmth, and an unwavering commitment to helping others.

Dan will be remembered as a proud Navy veteran, devoted husband and father, respected labor and business leader, trusted friend, and tireless advocate for veterans and their families. Through CMAC and the 40 et 8, he helped strengthen organizations, increase participation, preserve meaningful traditions, and ensure that veterans and their sacrifices would never be forgotten.

Dan was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Linda. He is survived by his children, Bobbie Johns and Daniel Tarbell Jr., along with his family members, friends, fellow veterans, colleagues, and the many people whose lives were touched by his leadership and generosity.

Dan spent a lifetime serving others. His influence can be seen in every ceremony he helped preserve, every organization he strengthened, every veteran he supported, and every person he inspired to serve.

His presence will be deeply missed, but his legacy will continue throughout Clark County and far beyond.

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